

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 11, 2014

The Honorable Thomas Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

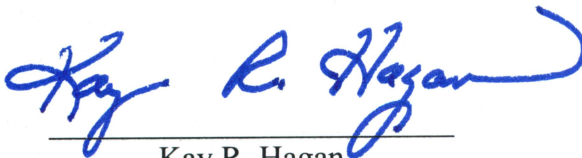
We are writing today in regards to a new virus that is devastating the pork industry, porcine endemic diarrhea virus (PEDv). PEDv has killed over 4 million pigs in the United States since April 2013. The virus has a reported mortality rate of nearly 100 percent for piglets under two weeks old. Consequently, pork producers that have been impacted by PEDv face economic devastation, these producers are finally experiencing periods of higher margins after prolonged periods of razor thin profits. If this disease persists, pork herds will continue to diminish and producers risk going out of business.

The 2014 Farm Bill permanently extended the livestock disaster program. We encourage you to utilize the livestock disaster programs to help producers in North Carolina, Michigan and the other 24 states that are coping with this devastating virus. Much like the rest of the livestock industry that suffered drought, fires and blizzards, these pork producers have no safety net to help compensate for their losses.

We also understand that USDA is collaborating with pork industry stakeholders on research for a vaccine and other interventions to address PEDv. We applaud these efforts and encourage you to find ways to increase research and efforts to stop this devastating disease.

Thank you for your efforts and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Kay R. Hagan
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator